ration extends to other outstation establishments of the Plant including its Calcutta office. Therefore, the question of according recognition to Bokaro Steel Plant Employees Union (Calcutta) does not arise.

Special programme for the unemployed persons

2211. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 424 given in the Rajya Sabha on 21st July, 1989 and state whether Government propose to chalk out any special programmes to provide employment to the unemployed persons in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RADHAKRISHAN MALAVIYA): The Central element of the development strategy of Seventh Plan is generation of productive employment. Besides development programmes for various sectors, a number of special employment programmes are already being implemented. During the current year (1989-90), these efforts are being intensified through Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

SC|ST living below the poverty line

2212. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in his latest report have observed that about 70 per cent of the Scheduled Castes people in the country continue to live below the poverty line;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the findings of the Commissioner for SC/ST; and

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) The latest report i.e. 28th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes says that the proportion of people below poverty line among the Scheduled Castes was estimated to be about 70 per cent as against the overall average of 48 per cent among the general population in 1978-79.

(b) The said report which has been tabled in Parliament on 9th May, 1989 may be referred to for this information.

(c) A number of measures have been taken to alleviate the economic position of Scheduled Caste families below poverty line. Special Central Assistance, which is an additive to the States' Plans, the economic support schemes taken up by the Scheduled Castes Development Corporations, the efforts under the Special Component Plans of the Central Ministries/ Deptts. and States/Union Territories, etc. have ben geared to improve the lot to Scheduled Caste families below poverty line.

2213. [*Transferred to the 8th August*, 1989]

Chaff cutter accidents

2214. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the chaff cutter accidents as compared to the thresher accidents annually in the agricultural sector in the country according to the assessment, if any, made by Government;

(b) what is the percentage of rise in the chaff cutter accidents, the age group of such accident victims, the nature of the assistance given by Government for their rehabilitation; and

(c) what are the details of the research, if any, done to bring about improvement in the chaff cutter designs to make it more safer and accidents free?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) and (b) No such assessment has been made.

(c) Safety standards have been specified in IS 7898-1981 specification for manually operated chaff cutter (Ist Revision) and IS 11459-1985 for power operated chaff cutter.

Crisis in the foundries due to acute shortage of pig iron

2215. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the crisis in the foundries particularly in the Northern States in the country which are facing closure affecting over 50 lakh people due to acute shortage of pig iron;

(b) if so, what is the gap between demand and supply of pig iron during 1987, 1988 and 1989 (till date);

(c) what is the quantity of pig iron imported by the canalising agencies during 1988 to meet the demand; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to meet the situation and also for a long-term solution to the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR) : (a) The situation of shortage in pig iron has eased on account of improvement in its supply during the current year.

(b) and (c) The demand is assessed financial year-wise.

The gap between demand and supply of pig iron and actual imports are as follows:

(Qty. in lakh tonnes)

Year	Gap bteween demand and domestic supply	Actual imports (Provisional)
1986-87	1.45	0.45
1987-88	2.94	0.34
1988-89	3.97	1.66

Imports in these years were less then the gap primarily because of the high landed cost. The quantum of imports went up in 1988-89 on account of reduction in import duty.

(d) (i)SAIL has been asked to increase production of pig iron though it is not financially attractive for SAIL to do so;

(ii) Customs duty on import of pig iron has been reduced to bring down the landed cost;

(iii) Foreign exchange provision has been made for import of pig iron to augment domestic availability; and

(iv) Visakhapatnam Steel Plant would start production of pig iron during the year.

Assessment of poverty areas and prosperity areas

2216. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made to find out the ratio of workers to population in the rural and urban areas and the areas considered to be poverty areas and prosperity areas;